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AMAR CHITRA KATHA

No. 345 Rs. 4/-

Mahabharata–9

The Birth of GHATOTKACHA

Sri Vidyabharathi Book Centre, Sringeri

Amar Chitra Katha
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AMAR CHITRA KATHA

MAHABHARATA

The Mahabharata is the longest epic known to man. It is also what may be called the total epic because, besides being a literary classic, it is a supreme work of philosophy and an exhaustive manual of morals and manners.

The origin of the Mahabharata is shrouded in mystery. Countless scholars have pried into the work to discover the personality of its author, Veda Vyasa, to pin down its date of composition, and to analyse its historical veracity. But doubts still persist on all these counts.

Was it possible for one person to compose over a hundred thousand verses? Handed down by oral tradition, was the Mahabharata written down in 800 B.C. or 600 B.C. or 300 B.C.? Can the levels of Painted Grey Ware and Northern Black Polished Ware, or the names of present-day cities and plains, or the radio-carbon tests of excavated materials, vouch for its historicity? There is no conclusive answer.

The core of the tale – the feud between the princely cousins, the Pandavas and the Kauravas, leading to the eighteen-day-long bloody war – must have had its roots in some real event. The text with its available recensions points to three oral versions : the first as recited by Veda Vyasa himself, the next as recited by his disciple Vaishampayana to Janamejaya, and the third as narrated again by one Sauti, who had heard Vaishampayana's recital. Additions and interpolations must have crept in at various times, till the advent of the printing-press and standard editions.

For this series, we have referred to the following works:

1. Mahabharata – Sanskrit text with a Hindi translation by Pandit Ramnarayandutt Shastri Pandey ("RAM"), published by Geeta Press, Gorakhpur.

2. Shri Mahabharatam – Translated into Malayalam verse, by Kunjikuttan Tampuran, and published by S.P.C.S., Kottayam.

3. The Mahabharata – Translated into English prose by Pratap Chandra Roy, and published by Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi.

4. The critical edition brought out by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune.

OUR FORTHCOMING TITLES:

December 1, 1985
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Mahabharata-10
THE PANDAVAS AT EKACHAKRA

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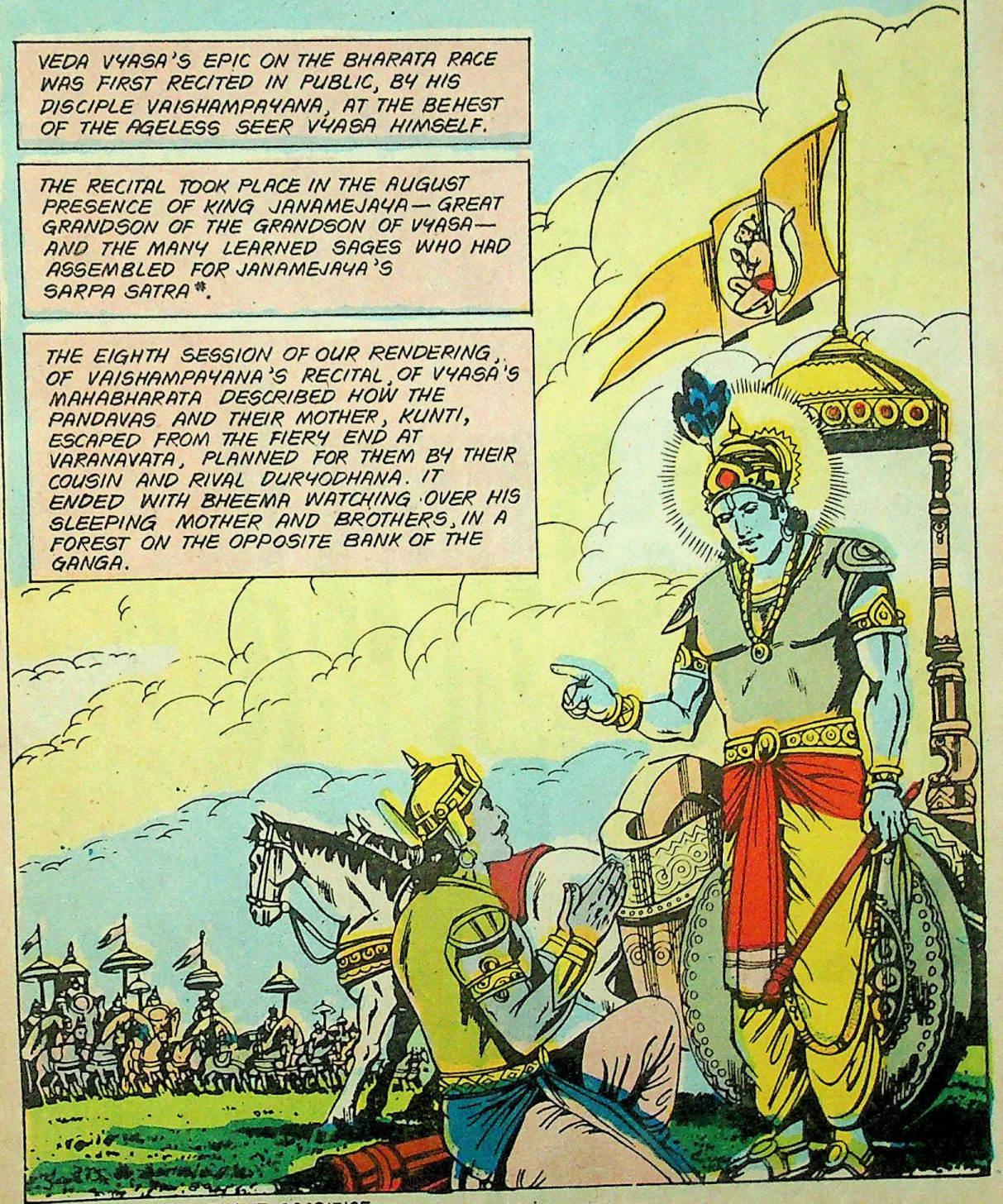
Mahabharata–9
The Birth of Ghatotkacha

VEDA VYASA'S EPIC ON THE BHARATA RACE WAS FIRST RECITED IN PUBLIC, BY HIS DISCIPLE VAISHAMPAYANA, AT THE BEHEST OF THE AGELESS SEER VYASA HIMSELF.

THE RECITAL TOOK PLACE IN THE AUGUST PRESENCE OF KING JANAMEJAYA — GREAT GRANDSON OF THE GRANDSON OF VYASA — AND THE MANY LEARNED SAGES WHO HAD ASSEMBLED FOR JANAMEJAYA'S SARPA SATRA*.

THE EIGHTH SESSION OF OUR RENDERING, OF VAISHAMPAYANA'S RECITAL, OF VYASA'S MAHABHARATA DESCRIBED HOW THE PANDAVAS AND THEIR MOTHER, KUNTI, ESCAPED FROM THE FIERY END AT VARANAVATA, PLANNED FOR THEM BY THEIR COUSIN AND RIVAL DURYODHANA. IT ENDED WITH BHEEMA WATCHING OVER HIS SLEEPING MOTHER AND BROTHERS, IN A FOREST ON THE OPPOSITE BANK OF THE GANGA.



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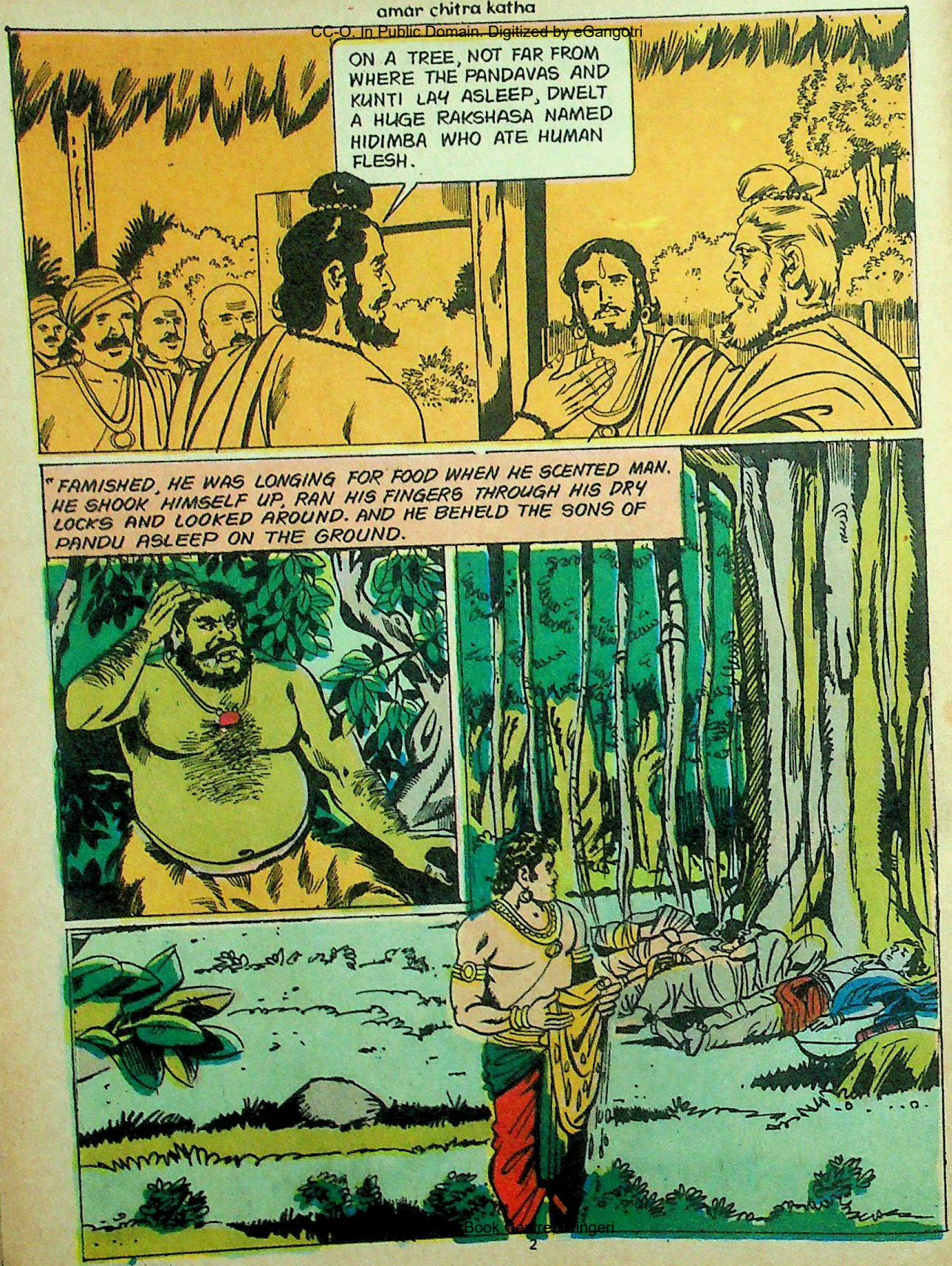

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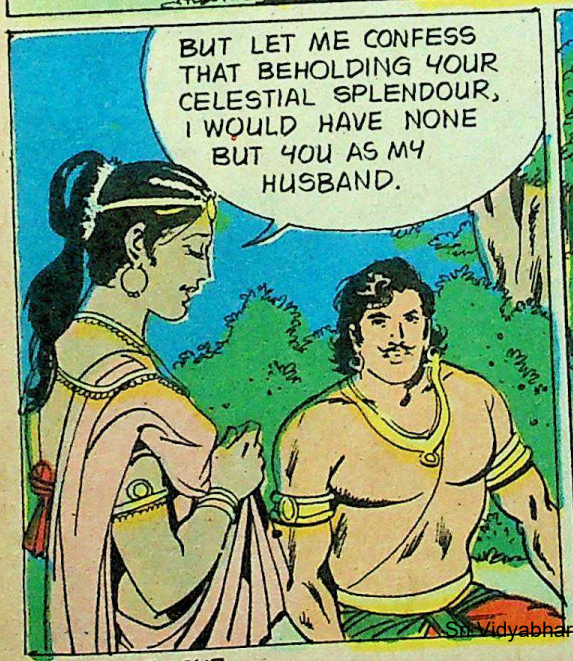

* GOD OF LOVE

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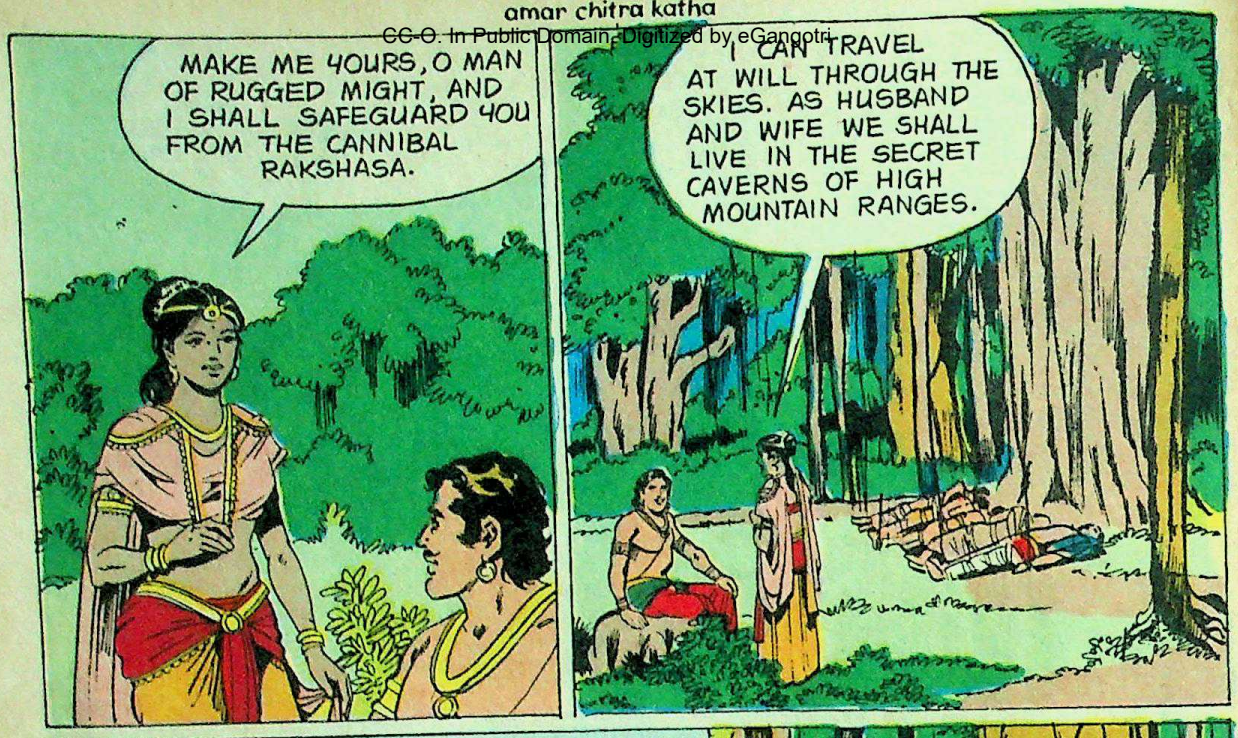

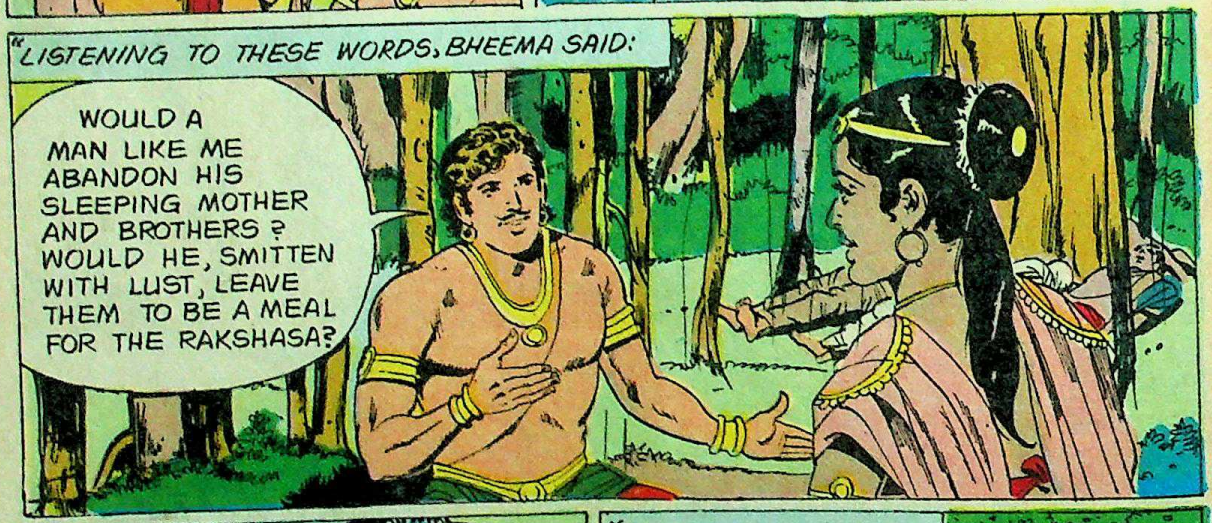

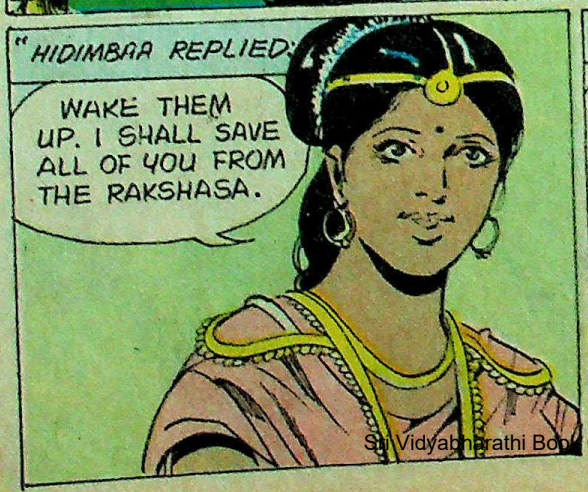

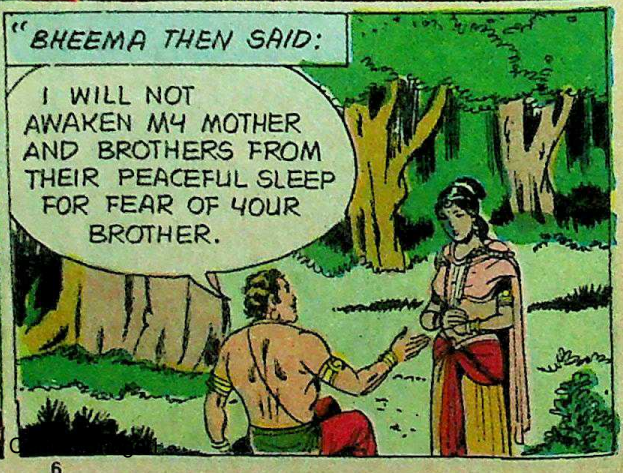

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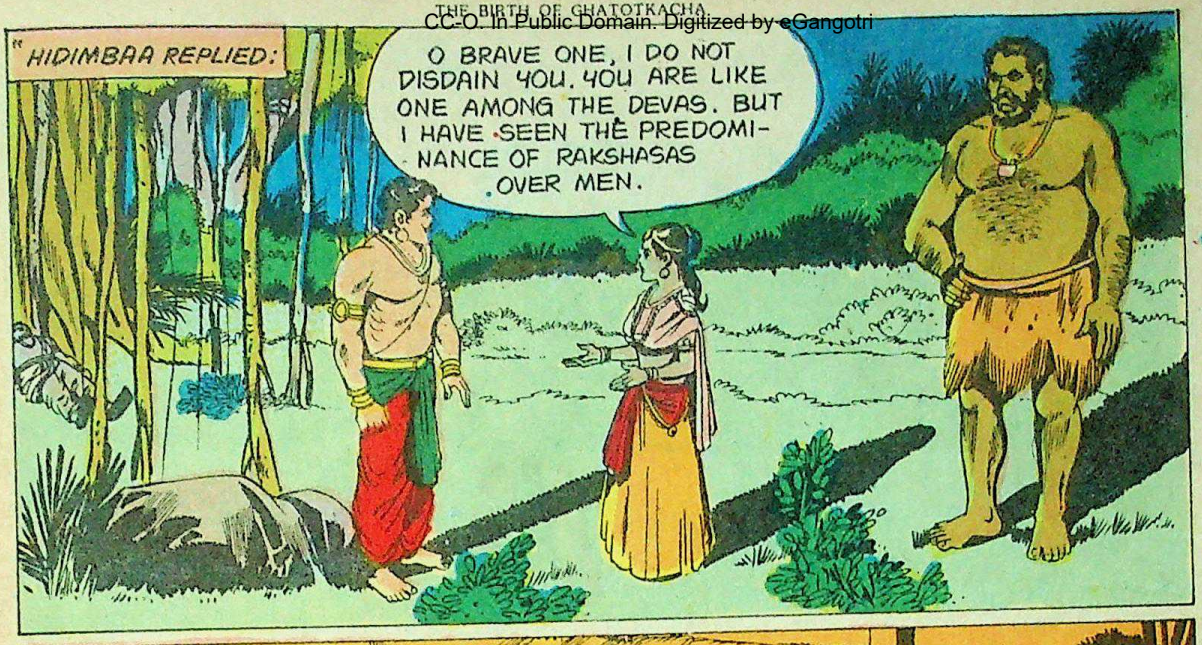

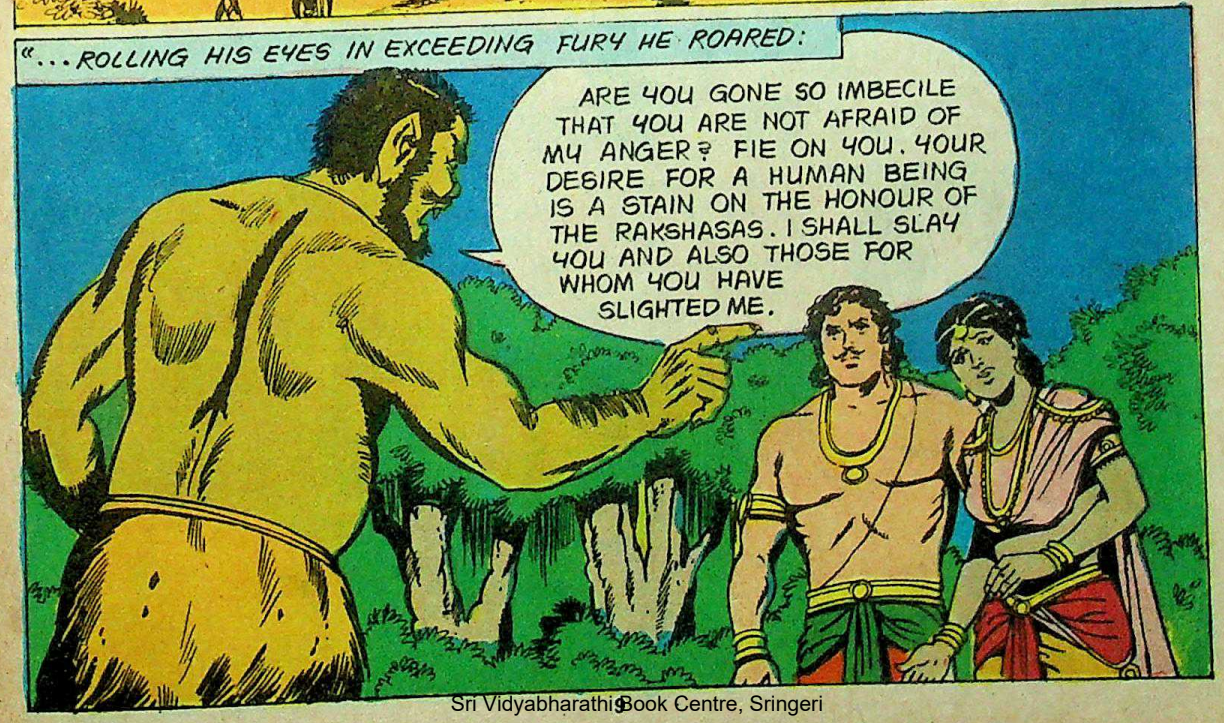

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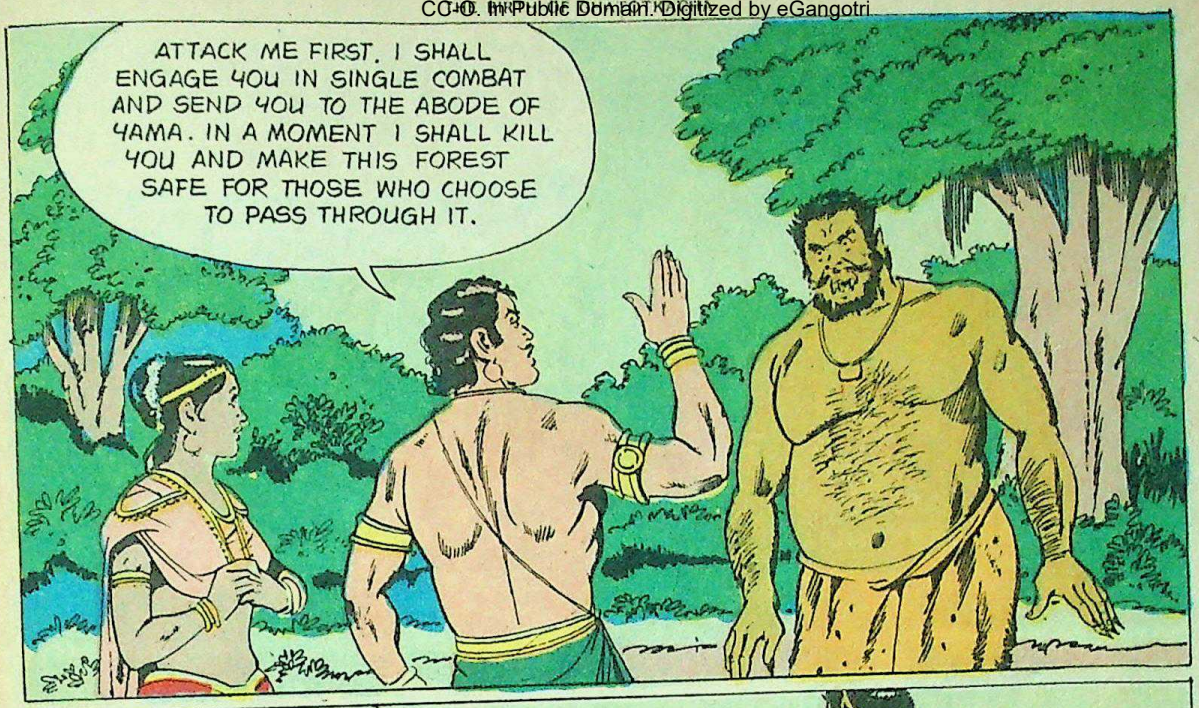

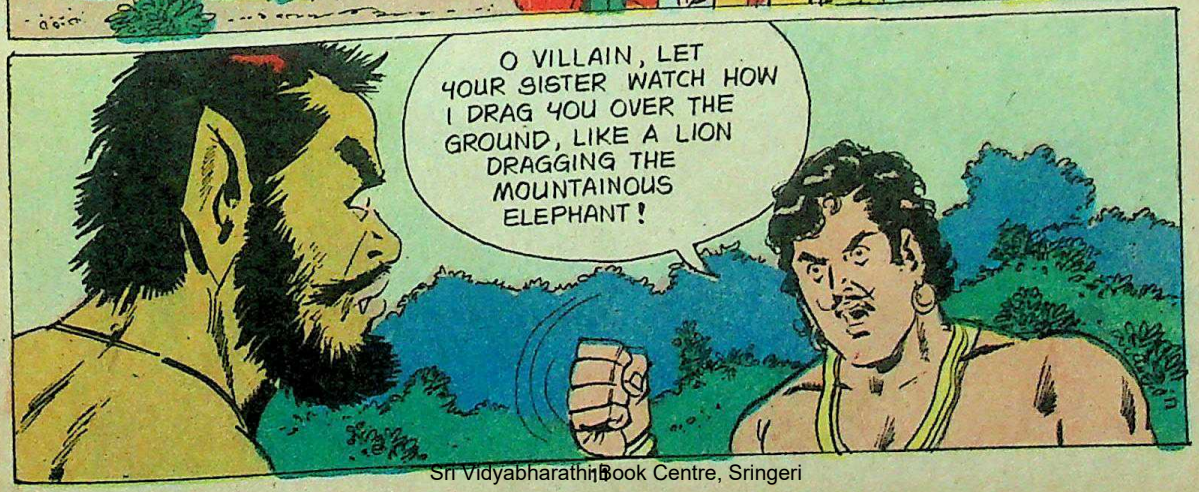

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"AND THE RAKSHASA, RAISING HIS ARMS IN WRATH, RUSHED FORTH TOWARDS BHEEMA.

"BHEEMA LAUGHINGLY CAUGHT HOLD OF HIS OUTSTRETCHED HANDS...

"...AND DRAGGED THE DESPERATELY STRUGGLING RAKSHASA A FULL THIRTY-TWO CUBITS, LIKE A LION DRAGGING SOME SMALL ANIMAL.

"SEIZED THUS BY BHEEMA, THE RAKSHASA TURNED FURIOUS AND HE LET OUT A FEARSOME YELL.

E-E-E-A-AH

THE MIGHTY BHEEMA THEN DRAGGED THE RAKSHASA FARTHER AWAY, O MONARCH, LEST HIS YELLS SHOULD DISTURB THE SLEEP OF HIS BROTHERS.

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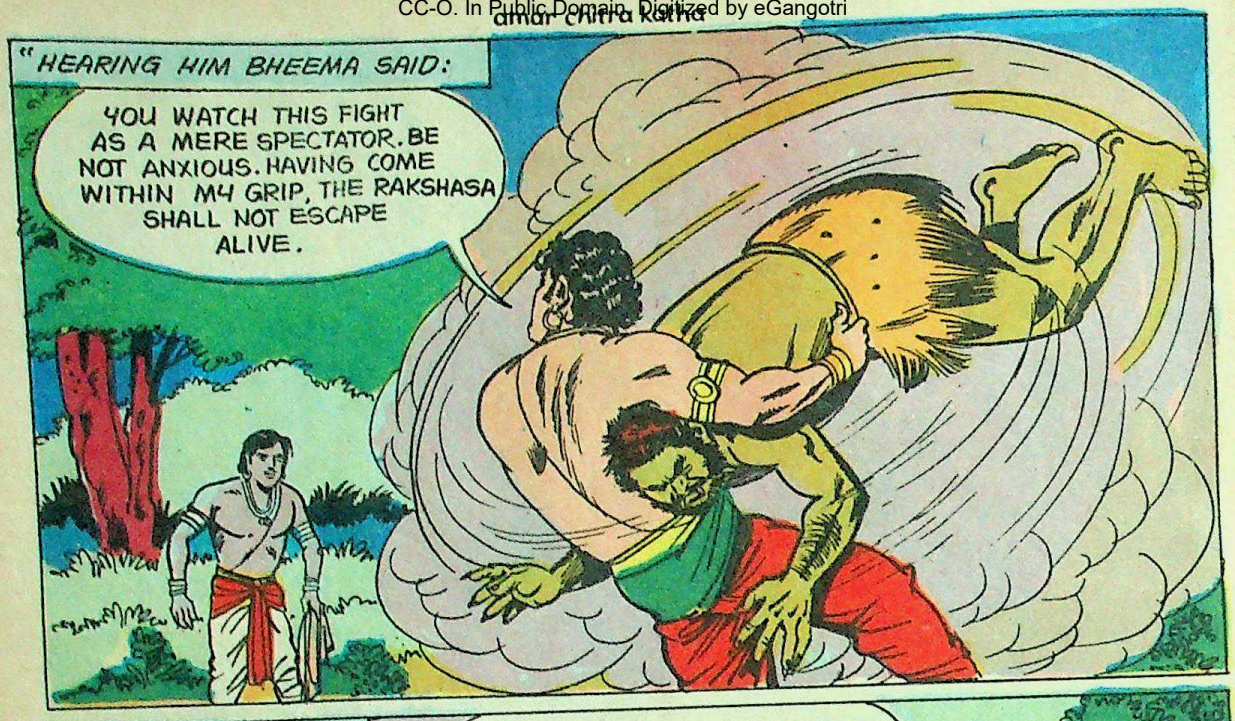

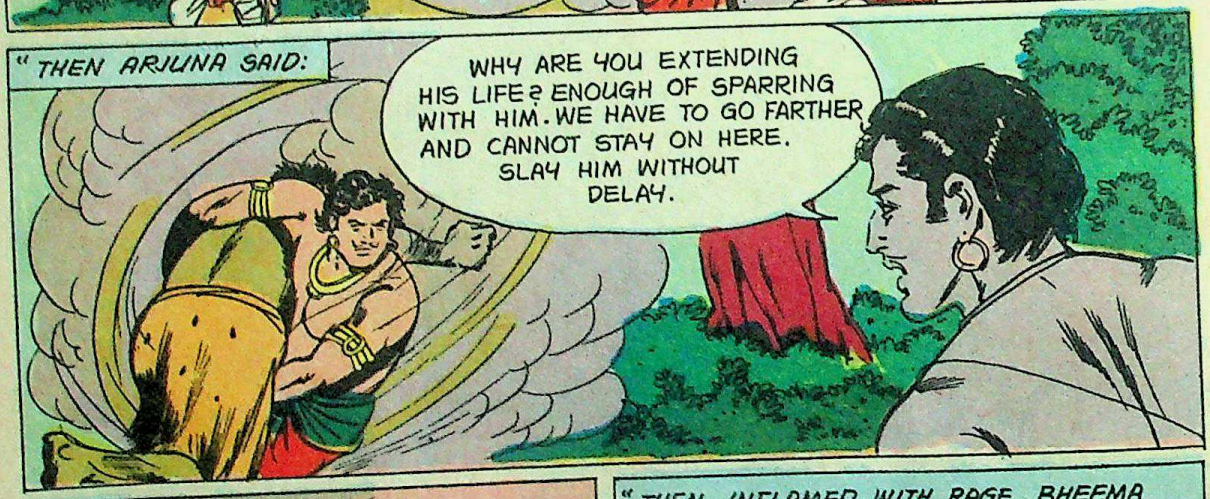

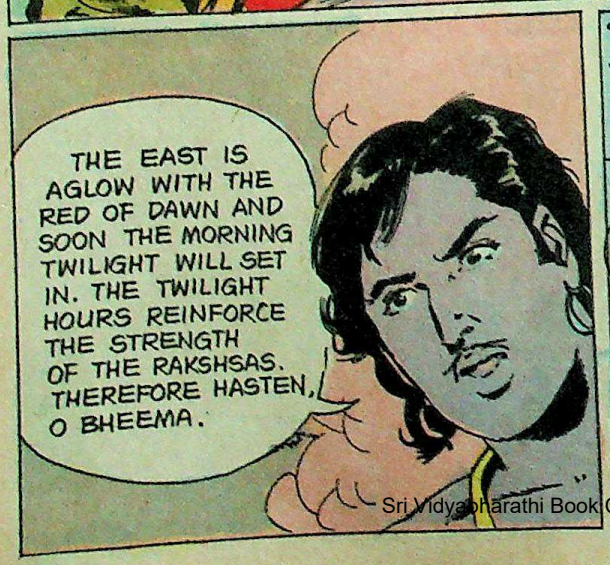

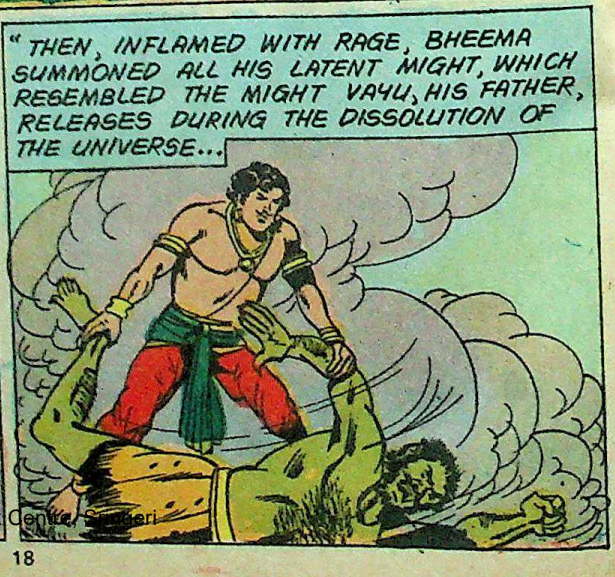

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"...LIFTED THE RAKSHASA HIGH AND, WHIRLING HIM ALOFT A HUNDRED TIMES, SAID TO HIM:

O RAKSHASA, YOUR CANNIBALISTIC STRENGTH, YOUR GROWTH, YOUR INTELLIGENCE HAVE ALL BEEN FUTILE. THEREFORE DO YOU SEEK TODAY A FUTILE END TO YOUR FUTILE LIFE.

"AT THIS JUNCTURE ARJUNA SAID:

IF YOU CONSIDER THIS RAKSHASA FORMIDABLE IN COMBAT, I SHALL HELP YOU TO SLAY HIM WITHOUT DELAY.

OTHERWISE I SHALL SLAY HIM MYSELF. YOU ARE EXHAUSTED BY THE TASK AND NEED TO REST FOR A WHILE.

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"INFURIATED BY THESE WORDS, BHEEMA HURLED THE RAKSHASA...

"...TO HIS DEATH. AND THE MORTAL ROAR OF THE DYING RAKSHASA FILLED THE WIDE FOREST.

BELEA

O MONARCH, THEN, WITH HIS BARE HANDS, THE MIGHTY BHEEMA BENT THE BODY OF THE RAKSHASA AND BROKE IT BY THE MIDDLE. THE FEAT PLEASED THE BROTHERS. AND THOSE BRAVE MEN CONGRATULATED THE VALOROUS CONQUEROR.

"THEN ARJUNA WHO WAS ALL REVERENCE FOR HIS BROTHER OF RUGGED MIGHT, SAID:

I BELIEVE THERE IS A TOWN NOT FAR FROM THIS FOREST. LET US GO ONWARD SOON SO THAT DURYODHANA DOES NOT TRACE US.

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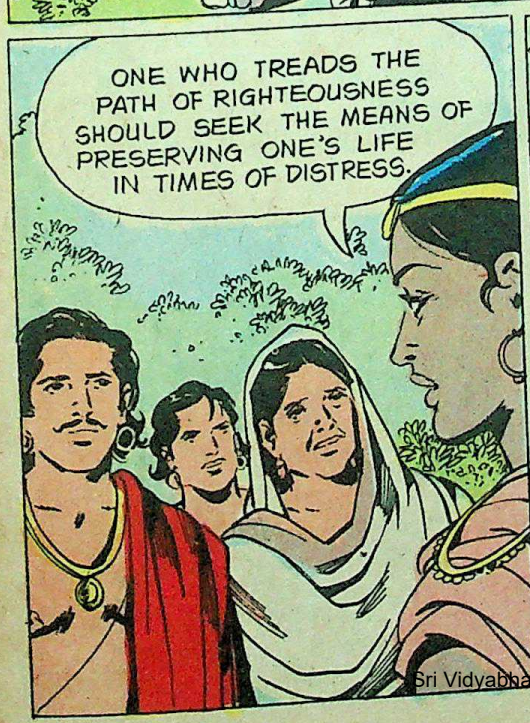

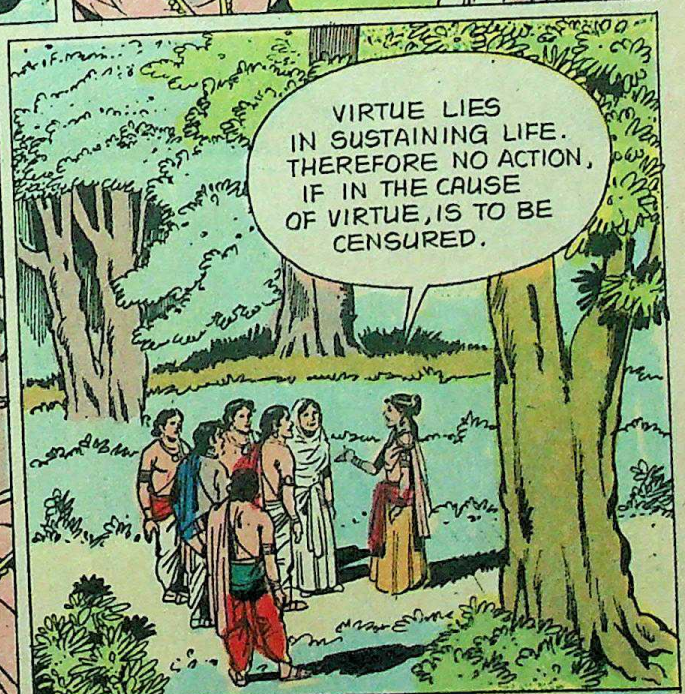

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"...HIDIMBAA TOOK BHEEMA ON HER BACK, ROSE UP...

"...AND SPED THROUGH THE SKIES.

"SHE SPORTED WITH HIM ON MOUNTAIN SLOPES WHERE CELESTIALS ROAM AND WHERE THE BIRDS SING AND WHERE EVERY SIGHT IS STIMULATING.

"SHE DESCENDED WITH HIM ON LAKES COVERED WITH LOTUSES...

"...AND WALKED WITH HIM THROUGH WILD FORESTS OF STRANGE TREES AND DELICATE CREEPERS.

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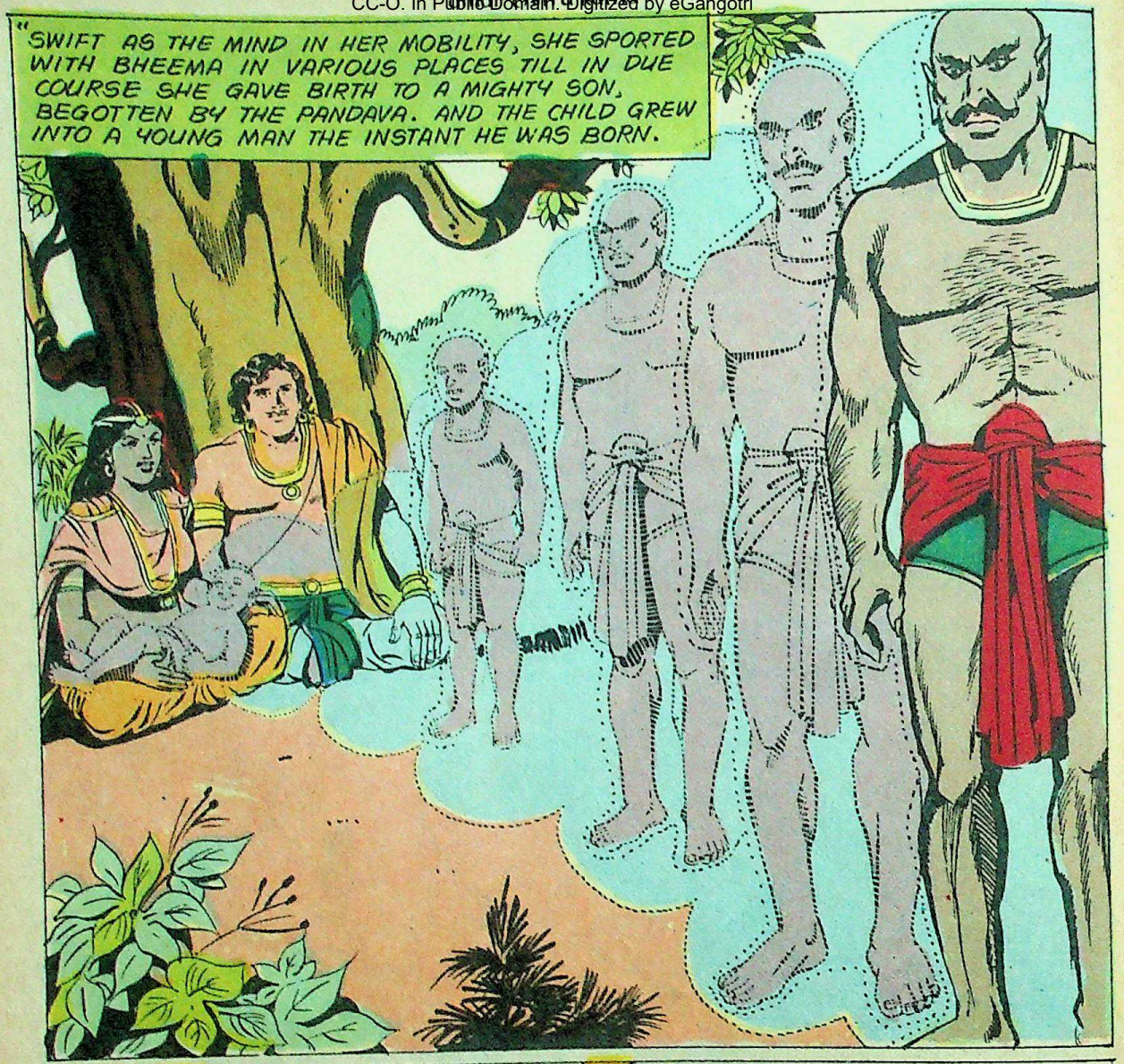

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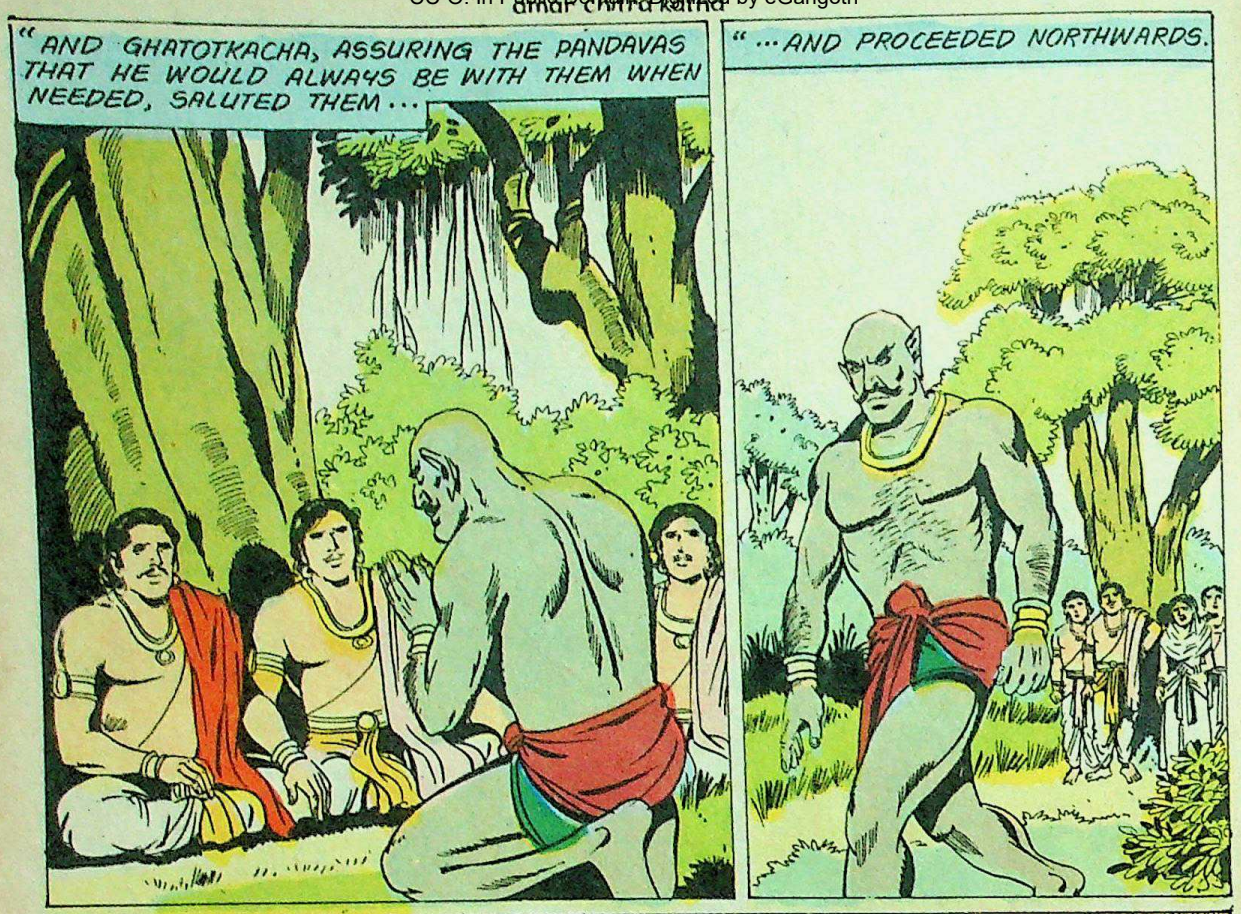

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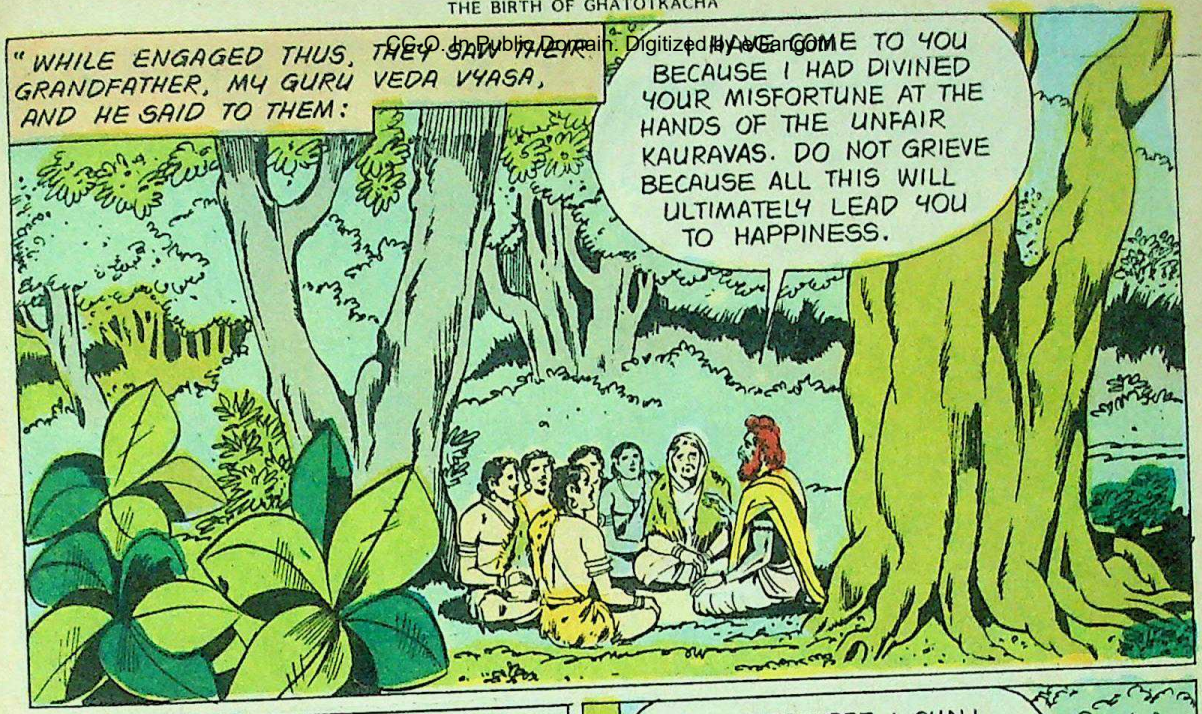

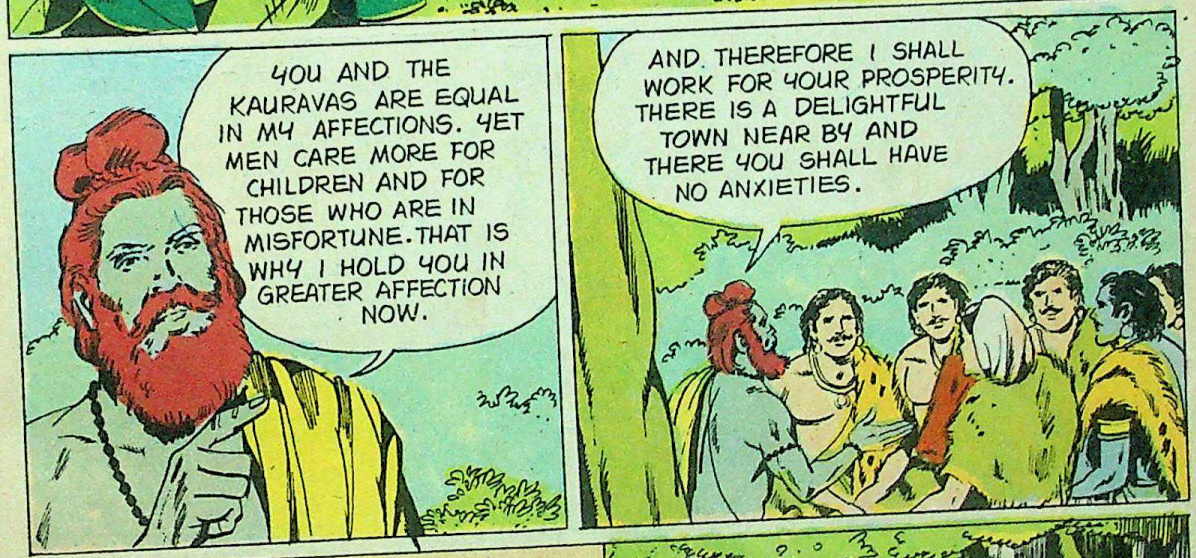

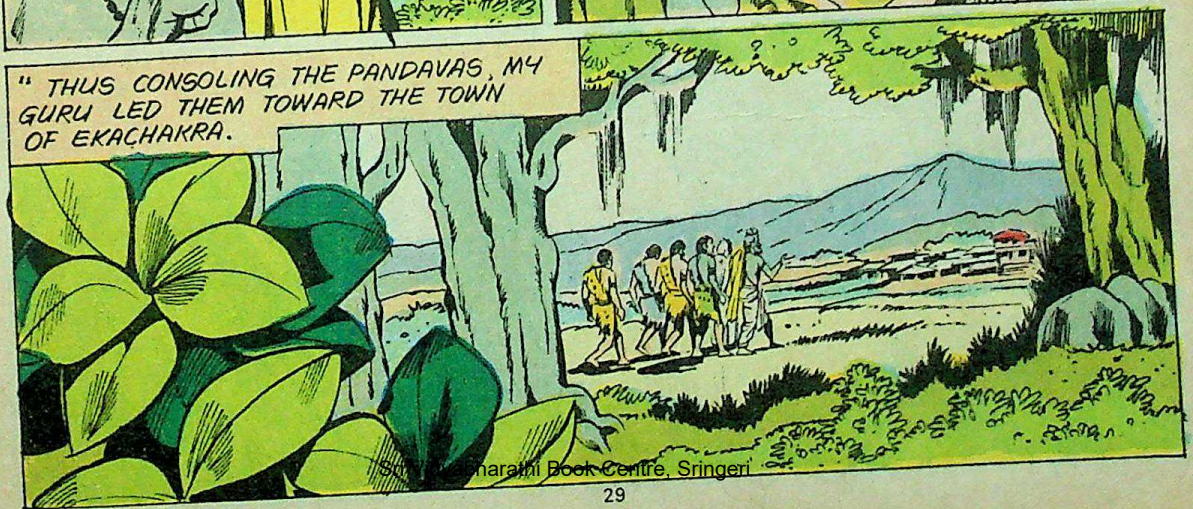

"WHILE ENGAGED THUS, THEY SAW THEIR GRANDFATHER, MY GURU VEDA VYASA, AND HE SAID TO THEM:

I HAVE COME TO YOU BECAUSE I HAD DIVINED YOUR MISFORTUNE AT THE HANDS OF THE UNFAIR KAURAVAS. DO NOT GRIEVE BECAUSE ALL THIS WILL ULTIMATELY LEAD YOU TO HAPPINESS.

YOU AND THE KAURAVAS ARE EQUAL IN MY AFFECTIONS. YET MEN CARE MORE FOR CHILDREN AND FOR THOSE WHO ARE IN MISFORTUNE. THAT IS WHY I HOLD YOU IN GREATER AFFECTION NOW.

AND THEREFORE I SHALL WORK FOR YOUR PROSPERITY. THERE IS A DELIGHTFUL TOWN NEAR BY AND THERE YOU SHALL HAVE NO ANXIETIES.

"THUS CONSOLING THE PANDAVAS, MY GURU LED THEM TOWARD THE TOWN OF EKACHAKRA.

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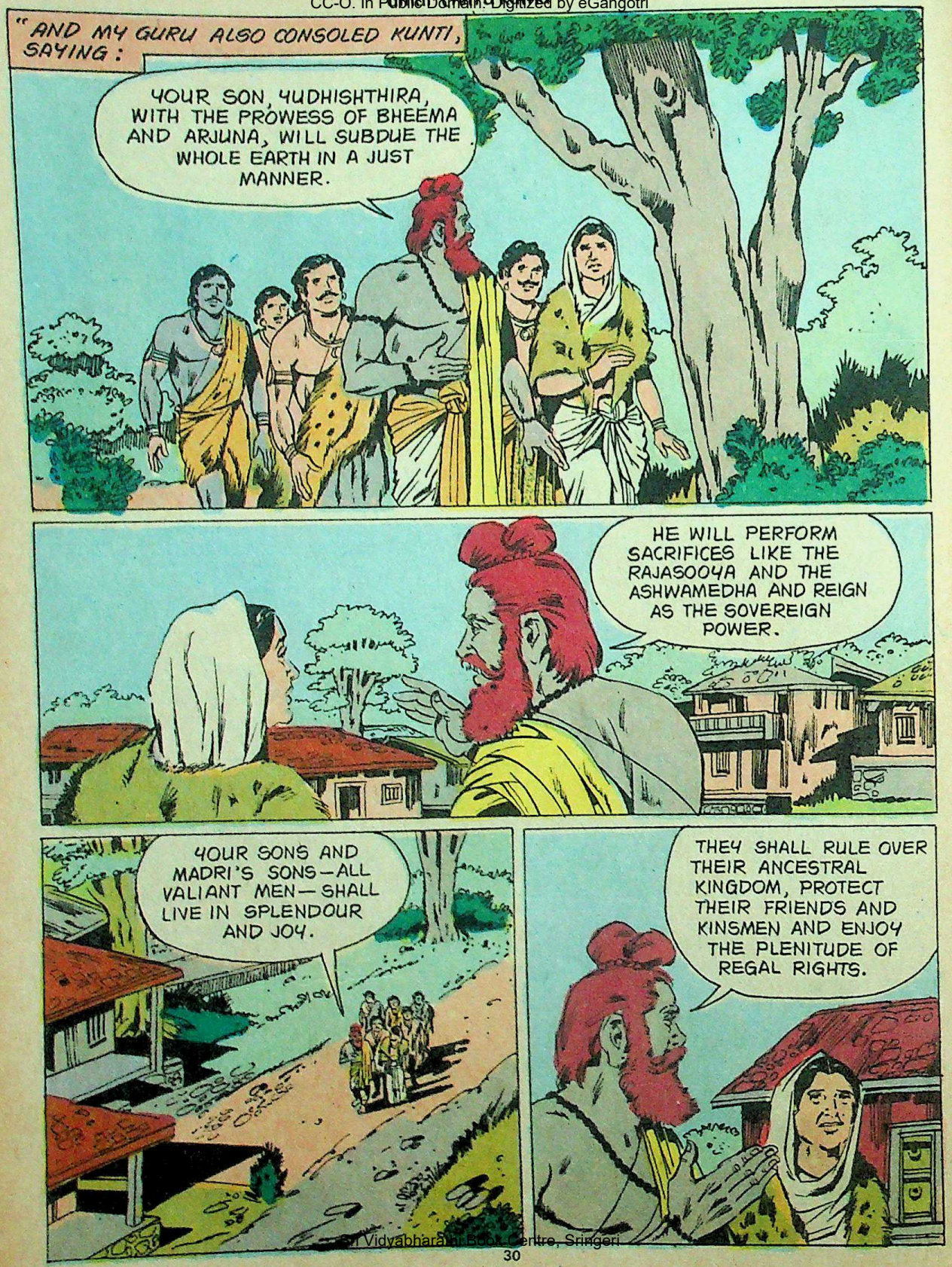

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"THEN MY GURU HAD THEM ACCOMMODATED IN A BRAHMANA'S HOUSE AND SAID TO YUDHISHTHIRA:

STAY HERE FOR A MONTH AND AWAIT MY RETURN. YOUR STAY HERE WILL BE HAPPY IF YOU ACT DISCERNING THE NEEDS OF THE PLACE AND THE TIMES.

"THEN THE PANDAVAS SALUTED THE RISHI WITH JOINED PALMS...

"... AND MY DIVINE GURU WENDED HIS WAY BACK.

IN THIS MANNER DID THE PANDAVAS, AFTER THE SLAYING OF HIDIMBA AND THE BIRTH OF GHATOTKACHA, ARRIVE AT EKACHAKRA.

THUS ENDS THE NINTH SESSION OF OUR RENDERING OF VAISHAMPAYANA'S RECITAL OF VYASA'S IMMORTAL ITIHASA, THE MAHABHARATA.

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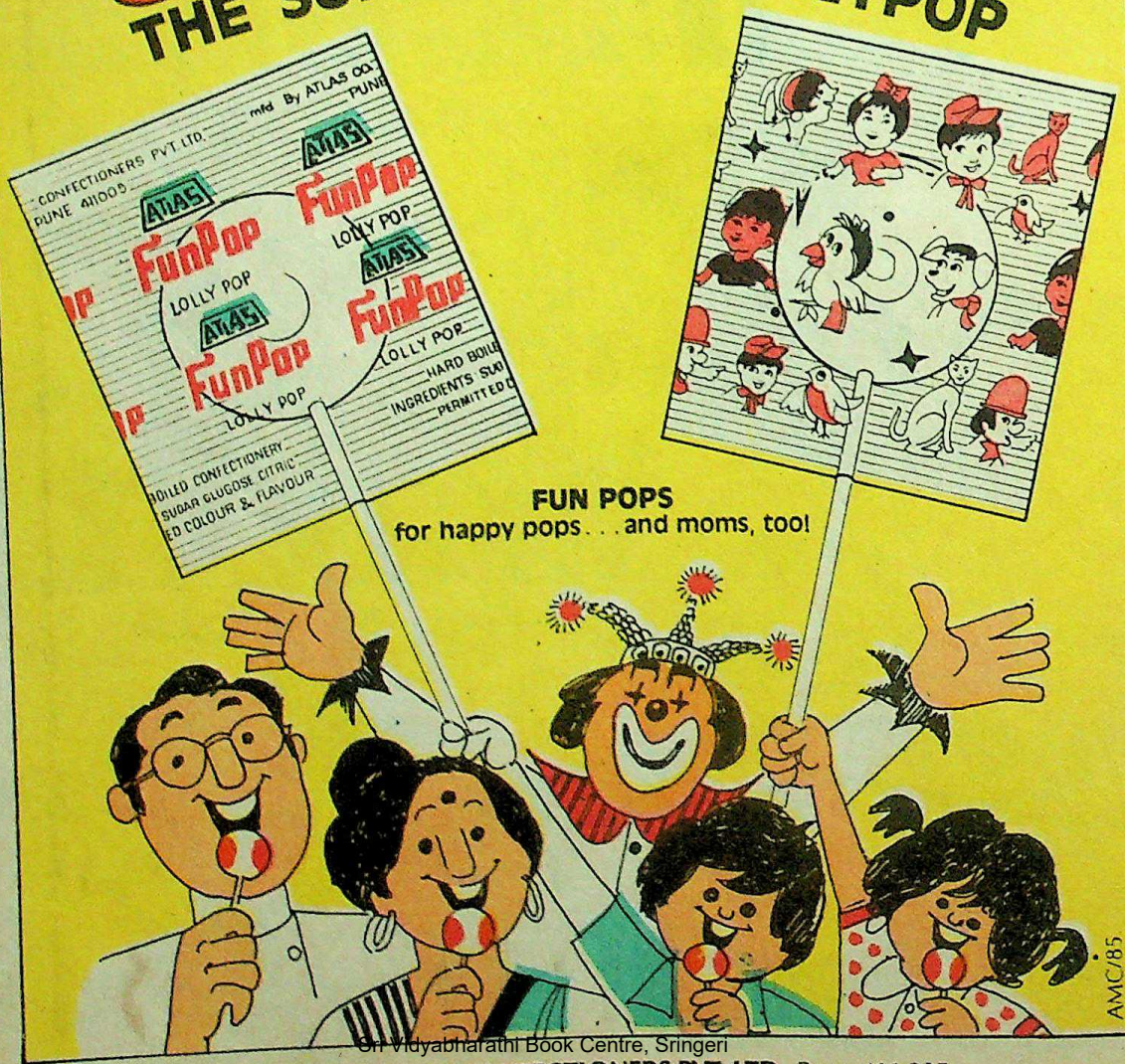

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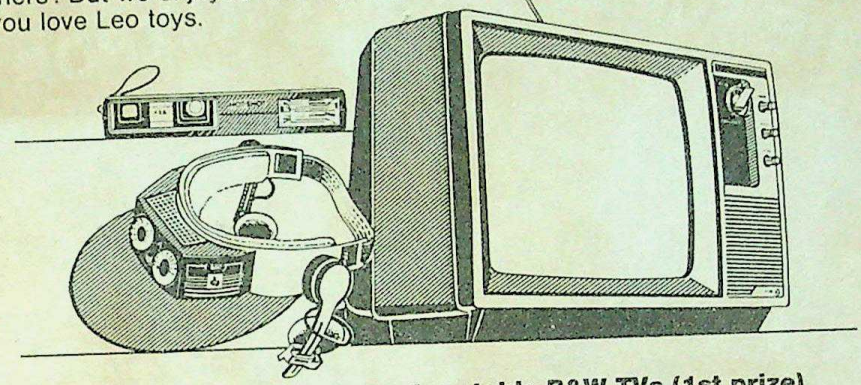
CONGRATULATIONS!

WINNERS OF THE LEO MIX 'N MATCH CONTEST

Here they are! The results of the Leo Mix 'n Match Contest!

It sure was difficult to pick out the winners! But we enjoyed reading why all of you love Leo toys.

The winners of the 200 consolation prizes will be notified by post. But if you just can't wait, rush to the nearest Leo toy dealer—he has the winning list too!



The four winners of portable B&W TVs (1st prize)

Sumeet Gulati
Adarsh Colony,
Indore.

Souvik Sinha
C/o. T.K. Sinha,
Serampore, Dist. Hooghly.

Richa Srivastava
9, Gunjan Park,
Ahmedabad.

Papay Singh
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Behala, Calcutta.

The six winners of Hot Shot Cameras with flash (2nd prize)

Kanishka Desarkar
C/o. Wg. Cdr. P. Desarkar,
C/o. 99 APO.

Stanley Menezes
C/o. Christie Gomes,
Margao, Goa.

Chantal Marie Cotta
C/o. Mr. Arlindo De Miranda,
Fatorda, Goa.

Romal Sood
House no. 24, Sector 2,
Chandigarh.

Sonoo Singh
509-7B, Chandigarh

Wayne J. Zakaria
Noy Venketapathy St.,
Madras.

The ten winners of Solar Transistors (3rd prize)

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Dhani Lal
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You can swirl it. You can twirl it. You can curl your tongue around it. 'Cos it's smooth rich caramel on the outside with real Cadbury's Dairy Milk chocolate tucked inside. Just waiting to be licked and licked and l-l-l-licked...

NEW!

Cadbury's

CHOCOLATE ECLAIR POPS

By Golly! It's a long-licking lolly!

Sri Vidyabharathi Book Centre, Sringeri

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